

Please replace all prior versions of the claims with the following listing of claims:

CLAIMS (as amended per response mailed on May 6, 2003)

1.(currently amended). A handle section (1) of an electric dental cleaning or brushing device (1, 2), with a coupling section for coupling a brushing or cleaning tool (2) thereto, ~~particularly a brush attachment,~~ with a drive mechanism (23) for driving the coupled brushing or cleaning tool, and with a control device (27) for controlling the drive mechanism, wherein characterized in that the control device (27) possesses an interlock device (100), for preventing operation of the drive mechanism, which is deactivatable by an interlock canceling element (7) provided in particular and preferably on the brushing or cleaning tool, such that when the brushing or cleaning tool is coupled to the coupling section of the handle, the interlock canceling element (7) is responsive to a first signal from the dental cleaning or brushing device (1, 2) to return a second signal receivable by the interlock device (100).

2(currently amended). The handle section as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the interlock device (100) is deactivatable or deactivated by the interlock canceling element (7) when the brushing or cleaning tool is coupled to the handle section.

3(currently amended). A ~~The handle section (1) as claimed in claim 1~~ of an electric dental cleaning or brushing device (1, 2), with a coupling section for coupling a brushing or cleaning tool (2) thereto, with a drive mechanism (23) for driving the coupled brushing or cleaning tool, and with a control device (27) for controlling the drive mechanism, wherein the control

device (27) possesses an interlock device (100) which is deactivatable by an interlock canceling element (7) provided on the brushing or cleaning tool, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the control device (27) includes an encoding detection device (5) for detecting an encoding of the interlock canceling element (7) of the ~~attached~~ coupled brushing or cleaning tool (2), and that the interlock device (100) is deactivatable in response to a signal from the encoding detection device (5).

4(currently amended). The handle section as claimed in claim 3 ~~4~~, wherein ~~provision is made for~~ a switch is provided on the handle section (1), ~~preferably~~ said switch being an on-off switch of the drive mechanism (23), for activation of the encoding detection device (5), said drive mechanism (23) being adapted to be turned on upon a signal from ~~positive response of~~ the encoding detection device (5) or upon deactivation of the interlock device (100).

5(currently amended). The handle section as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the interlock device (100) operates electronically.

6(currently amended). The handle section as claimed in claim 3, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the encoding detection device (5) is of the noncontacting type.

7(withdrawn)

8(withdrawn)

9(withdrawn)

10(withdrawn)

11(withdrawn)

12(withdrawn)

13(withdrawn)

14(currently amended). The handle section as claimed in claim 3 ~~4~~, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the encoding detection device (5) includes a signal receiver (20) for receiving an encoded signal from the brushing or cleaning tool (2), more specifically ~~particularly~~ from the interlock canceling element (7), and/or a signal transmitter (20) for transmitting a signal, particularly an interrogation or activation signal, to the coupled brushing or cleaning tool (2), more specifically ~~in particular~~ the interlock canceling element (7).

15(withdrawn)

16(withdrawn)

17(currently amended). The handle section as claimed in claim 3 ~~4~~, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the encoding detection device (5) includes a sensor (9), more specifically ~~in particular~~ a circuit ~~or the like~~, for detecting a metallic and/or electromagnetic encoding of the brushing or ~~respective~~ cleaning tool (2) coupled ~~attached~~, more specifically ~~particularly~~ the interlock canceling element (7).

18(withdrawn).

19(withdrawn).

20(currently amended). The handle section as claimed in claim 3 ~~4~~, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the encoding detection device (5) is arranged in a closed, ~~in particular~~ fluid-tight handle housing (26).

21(currently amended). The handle section according to ~~the prior art portion of~~ claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the interlock canceling element (7) for deactivation of ~~an~~ the interlock device (100) of the handle section (1) is ~~associated~~ with the handle section itself, being in particular fastened to or in a the handle housing (26).

22(withdrawn)

23(currently amended). A brushing or cleaning tool, ~~in particular a brush attachment,~~ with a housing, a coupling section extending from the housing to effect coupling to a handle section (1) of an electric dental cleaning device, and ~~characterized by~~ an interlock canceling element (7) secured directly or indirectly to the housing for deactivation of an interlock device (100) of the handle section (1), the interlock device (100), when activated, disabling the electric dental cleaning device from operating in a normal cleaning manner, such that when the brushing or cleaning tool is coupled to the handle section, the interlock canceling element (7) is responsive to a first signal received from the handle section to return a second signal to the interlock device (100) of the handle section.

24(currently amended). A The brushing or cleaning tool as ~~claimed in claim 23,~~ with a coupling section to effect coupling to a handle section (1) of an electric dental cleaning device, and an interlock canceling element (7) for deactivation of an interlock device (100) of the handle section (1), wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the interlock canceling element (7) includes an encoding device or ~~acting member or is configured as an acting member~~ having ~~in particular~~ a magnetic, electrical, capacitive, electromagnetic, optical and/or mechanical encoding function or property ~~acting function.~~

25(currently amended). A The brushing or cleaning tool as
~~claimed in claim 23~~, with a coupling section to effect coupling
to a handle section (1) of an electric dental cleaning device,
and an interlock canceling element (7) for deactivation of an
interlock device (100) of the handle section (1), wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the interlock canceling element includes a
signal receiver for receiving a signal from the handle section
(1) and/or a signal transmitter for transmitting an interlock
deactivating signal to the handle section (1), ~~in particular a~~
~~smart transponder chip (19)~~.

26(currently amended). The brushing or cleaning tool as
claimed in claim 25, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the signal
receiver and/or the signal transmitter, in the form of one or
more metal particular coils (44, 45), have ~~are assigned~~ encoding
elements for encoding a the received signal.

27(currently amended). A The brushing or cleaning tool as
~~claimed in claim 23~~, with a coupling section to effect coupling
to a handle section (1) of an electric dental cleaning device,
and an interlock canceling element (7) for deactivation of an
interlock device (100) of the handle section (1), wherein
~~characterized in that~~ the interlock canceling element possesses
an encoding body ~~, particularly a shaped body~~, which is fixedly
connected to a the body of the cleaning tool and ~~arranged and~~
configured so as to be positioned in the range of detection of
an encoding detection device (5) of the handle section (1) when
the cleaning tool (2) and the handle section (1) are in a
coupled condition.

28 (withdrawn)

29 (withdrawn)

30 (withdrawn)

31 (withdrawn)

32 (withdrawn)

33 (withdrawn)

34 (currently amended). The brushing or cleaning tool as claimed in claim 23, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the interlock canceling element (7) is an integral part of a ~~the~~ body of the brushing or cleaning tool.

35 (currently amended). The brushing or cleaning tool as claimed in claim 23, wherein the interlock canceling element (7) is releasably connected to a ~~the~~ body of the brushing or cleaning tool ~~preferably releasably~~.

36 (withdrawn)

37 (cancelled)

38 (cancelled)

39. (New). The brushing or cleaning tool as claimed in claim 25, wherein the interlock canceling element (7) comprises a smart transponder chip (19).